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1851

SLAVERY:

ITS RELIGIOUS SANCTION, ITS POLITICAL DANGERS, AND
THE BEST MODE OF DOING IT AWAY.

A LECTURE

DELIVERED BEFORE THE

YOUNG MENS' ASSOCIATIONS

OF THE

CITY OF BUFFALO, AND LOCKPORT,

ON

FRIDAY, JANUARY 10, AND MONDAY, JANUARY 13, 1851.

BY JOHN H. HOPKINS, D. D.,
BISHOP OF THE DIOCESE OF VERMONT.

PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.

BUFFALO:
PUBLISHED BY PHINNEY & CO.

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LETTER OF REQUEST.

BUFFALO, JAN. 14, 1851.

DEAR SIR,

Your Discourse on American Slavery, delivered before the "Young Men's Association of Buffalo," on the evening of the 10th inst., afforded us, in common, we believe, with all who heard it, great gratification. The views and suggestions therein contained appear to us well calculated to do great good in the present unsettled state of public opinion, and to lead to more just, rational and patriotic notions on the subject, could they be widely disseminated in the community.

With this view and belief, we would respectfully ask a copy of the same for publication.

[SIGNED]

WILLIAM SHELTON,
CHARLES A. LEE,
C. B. COVENTRY,
M. SCHUYLER,
EDWARD INGERSOLL,
AUSTIN FLINT.

TO THE

RIGHT REVEREND BISHOP HOPKINS.

ANSWER.

BURLINGTON, VT., FEB. 17, 1851.

GENTLEMEN,

I comply, very cheerfully, with the request of your letter, that my Lecture on Slavery should be given to you for publication. No one can be more fully aware than myself, that its author possesses no special claims upon the public attention. But I believe that it contains the truth, and I am sure that it was written in the spirit of kindness and impartiality. That it should be read in the same spirit, is, of course, not always to be expected; and I think myself quite prepared to receive, with patient submission, my share of reproach, from those who cannot see, in the same light, the rule of duty. In the hope, nevertheless, that the result may not altogether disappoint your friendly anticipations, I remain,

Your faithful servant in Christ,

[SIGNED]

JOHN H. HOPKINS.

TO MESSRS.

WILLIAM SHELTON, AND OTHERS.

LECTURE.

I SHALL make no apology, my friends, for the choice of my subject, on the present occasion. For the general judgment of intelligent minds throughout the Union, pronounces Slavery to be the great question of the day, and all classes of men, whatever may be their position in the community, are interested in its settlement, and bound to contribute, so far as may be practicable, to have it settled on a wise and permanent foundation. That it is not settled yet, is painfully manifest. The long and stormy session of the last Congress was indeed terminated by measures of compromise, which no sound and patriotic American would wish to see disturbed. For these measures, I desire to acknowledge my share of gratitude to the over-ruling Providence of God, and to the admirable statesmen who were ready to risk their personal popularity for the safety of the Union. But I cannot persuade myself to believe that the position of our country requires nothing further. The antagonists of Slavery are not a whit more reconciled. The advocates of Slavery are far from being satisfied. And the great inquiry still remains unanswered—if not, as most men think, unanswerable—How shall a final disposition be made of this most embarrassing and dangerous question.

You will not do me the injustice of supposing that I claim any peculiar sagacity in reference to a difficulty like this. After the subject has been so long and so thoroughly discussed by the greatest statesmen of the North and the South, it would be the height of presumption in me to undertake the office of a guide, which belongs to those whose eminent position makes them the leaders of public opinion. And yet, as ours is a government of the people, and every question of importance must, sooner or later, be determined by the majority who appoint the law makers of the land, it may sometimes be the duty of the humblest citizen to think and speak, as an adviser, on any great topic of general interest, under the full conviction that he holds a personal share in the common welfare. For we are all partners in our Country's honor and prosperity. We must all be sufferers in its ruin or disgrace. And we

can all do something—be it much or little—towards the final establishment of those views, which are likely to prove the most judicious and conservative. For my own part, however, I have long held it to be a sound rule, that the ministers of Christ are apt to do harm rather than good, by meddling with political controversy, And if this were nothing more than a political controversy, I should have willingly passed it by, as a matter which hardly belonged to my vocation. But, in truth, it is a question of religion as well as policy. Both parties appeal to the Scriptures. Both claim the authority of the Gospel. Both invoke the law of Christian conscience, to justify their opposite conclusions. It must be obvious, therefore, that the Clergy cannot be accused of wandering out of their appropriate province, in offering their opinion upon a subject which lies within their peculiar sphere. For to them it belongs, in an especial manner, to understand the force of arguments derived from that Sacred Book, which is the unerring guide of religion and morality; and, assuredly, their judgment should not be regarded with less confidence, merely because it is their acknowledged duty to promote “peace and good will towards men.”

It may, perhaps, be acceptable to many of my respected auditors, that I should define my own position, in the commencement of my Lecture, with the candor which becomes a freeman. Permit me, then, to say, that I am no friend nor advocate of Slavery. I have never resided in a Slave-State, nor am I aware that I have a relative on earth, who is connected, directly or indirectly, with the institution. It is my fervent desire and prayer, that the whole system may be abolished, as soon as it can be, with due regard to the advantage of the South, to the best interest of the African race, and to the prosperity of the Union. But I consider myself to be none the less bound to support the claims of the Constitution and the laws, of charity and forbearance, of justice and impartiality. And my object, on the present occasion, is to explain the only course by which, as it seems to me, the final abolition of Slavery can be attained, without transgressing these acknowledged rules of Christian obligation.

But before I enter upon the main discussion, I would premise that the subject involves what may be called, with special emphasis, a **FAMILY QUARREL**; and you all know that there is no kind of quarrel which needs so much to be treated with patience, with calmness, and with the mutual desire to conciliate. It can never be right to conduct it in the temper of fiery resentment, of bitter reproach, or of fierce denunciation. That would be a very unchristian, and, moreover, a very foolish way of treating a dispute with a foreign nation. But how much more must it be unchristian and unwise to adopt such a course, in a dispute with those who are bound to us by the marriage tie of our great federal Union!

The North and the South should always be considered as wedded together, before heaven and earth, in the glorious Covenant of the Constitution. We have taken each other, in that solemn compact, "for better, for worse, till death us do part." And when matrimonial troubles arise, as they inevitably will during the difficulties inseparable from human infirmity, we must settle them in the spirit of love and wisdom—each party anxious to accommodate the other as far as possible, consistently with reason and with truth, and carefully avoiding the temper of abuse and provocation.

It follows, of course, under this aspect of the controversy, that the first point to be ascertained is the amount of mutual concession. And here we find that there are two questions involved in the dispute. The one is a question of SIN—the other is a question of EVIL AND DANGER; and I propose to consider them both, according to their relative importance and dignity.

1. Our Northern abolitionists—that is to say, the party which is so called by eminence—insist, as you are all aware, that it is a sin to hold the African race in slavery; that every slave-owner is of necessity living in the constant violation of the law of God; that so long as he continues in this relation, he is unfit to be a member of the Church of Christ; and that the only way in which he can avoid the condemnation due to such iniquity, is by giving freedom to his slaves without delay, and without regard to consequences.

On the other hand, the Southern States insist that the relation of Master and Slave is expressly permitted by the Bible; that slavery does not, therefore, of itself, involve any sin, and that every Christian is authorized by the divine law to own slaves of the African race, provided he treats them in accordance with the principles of the Gospel. Now let us consider, by a candid appeal to the Scriptures and the practice of the Church, whether we are not bound to concede that, in this point of the dispute, our Southern brethren are on the right side of the question.

When we open the sacred pages of the Word of God, we find a remarkable prophecy of Noah, pronouncing a malediction on the posterity of Ham—"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant."* The word here and elsewhere translated "servant," signifies a *bond servant*, or a slave; and, as the fact of slavery is directly connected with the blessing of Shem and Japheth, it is evident that they could not have been doomed to the commission of a sin, in fulfilling the inspired prediction.

* Gen. ix, 25-7.

We find, next, that the eminent patriarch Abraham, the "friend of God," and the father of the faithful, had a body of "three hundred and eighteen trained servants, born in his own house;"* that his wife, Sarah, had a bond-maid named Hagar, who fled from her severity, and the angel of the Lord commanded her to "return to her mistress and submit herself under her hands;"† that Isaac, the promised son of Abraham, had "great store of servants;"‡ that Jacob possessed "maid-servants and meu-servants;"§ that slavery was a customary thing with the Ishmaelites, who purchased Joseph from his brethren,|| and that it was established in Egypt, which is manifest from the sale of the same Joseph to Potiphar, the captain of the king's guard.** Thus early does it appear to have been a settled and universal institution.

But this evidence becomes still more conclusive, when we examine the law laid down for the posterity of Jacob, the chosen people of Israel, by the command of God, through the agency of Moses. For here we see, in the 25th chapter of Leviticus, from the 39th to the 46th verses, the following express enactments of the Almighty: "If thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond-servant: but as an hired servant, and as a sojourner he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: and then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, and shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return. For they are my servants which I brought forth out of the land of Egypt: they shall not be sold as bondmen." Here we find a precise prohibition of slavery with respect to any of the posterity of Israel. They might be sold to their brethren for debt, during a limited time, but were always to be released at the year of jubilee; and even during the period of their service, they were to be treated as hirelings, and not as slaves. Immediately afterwards, however, we see the different rule appointed in the case of the heathen, and this is the rule which is applicable to our subject, because the African race are heathen in their own land, of the lowest type of barbarism. The language of the Mosaic law is as follows:

"Both thy bondmen and thy bond-maids which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bond-maids. Moreover, of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bond-men

* Gen. xiv, 14.

† Gen. xvi, 6-9.

‡ Gen. xxvi, 14.

§ Gen. xxx, 43.

|| Gen. xxxvii, 23.

** Gen. ib. 36.

forever; but over your brethren, the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor."

This testimony is perfectly conclusive to prove that the Israelites were expressly allowed to hold slaves belonging to the heathen posterity of Ham, according to the prophecy of Noah. Many wholesome restrictions were indeed laid upon the power of the master, to guard against excessive cruelty or oppression. But the institution itself was clearly sanctioned by the divine authority, and thus it remained until the close of the Mosaic dispensation.

At the coming of the great Redeemer, slavery was an established system throughout the whole world, and we read of no country exempt from it. We have next, therefore, to inquire—What effect had the Gospel to abolish it? And to this I answer confidently—NONE, WHATSOEVER. Our Saviour did not leave on record a single sentence which relates directly to the subject. And when we come to the writings of His apostles, we find that, instead of attempting to prevent it, or denouncing it as a sin, they gave it their express sanction, by laying down rules for the conduct both of the master and the slave. This will be manifest from a few extracts, on the meaning of which there can be but one opinion, when it is remembered, that the word translated "a servant," signifies, in the original Greek, a *bond-servant*, or a slave; the same phraseology being used in the New, which we have already seen in the quotations from the Old Testament.

Thus, for example, St. Paul saith to the Corinthians—"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called, being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also, he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant."* Again, to the Ephesians, he saith—"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master is in heaven."† Again, in the instructions which the inspired apostle gives to Timothy, the first bishop of Ephesus, we read the following important passage: "Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them, because they are brethren; but rather do them service, because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things teach and

* 1 Cor. vii, 20.

† Eph. vi, 5.

exhort. If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: From such, withdraw thyself.”*

These passages would seem to be explicit enough to show the doctrine of the apostle. But there is yet another, which, in justice to the subject, ought not to be omitted, because it shows us not only the theory of St. Paul, but his practice also. In his Epistle to Philemon, we find that the slave Onesimus had absconded from his master, and the apostle had become the happy instrument of his conversion. What course, then, did he pursue with this converted slave? Mark it, I pray you. He sent him back to his master Philemon, asking, as a special favor, that he would forgive the fault, and receive the runaway with Christian kindness.† No argument can be necessary to illustrate the striking contrast between the inspired St. Paul and the modern doctors, who would persuade us that Philemon committed a sin by owning a slave, and that Onesimus was not only justified, on Gospel principles, in running away, but might even have lawfully resisted, unto blood, the attempt of his master to reclaim him! I would only add, that the views which I have presented on this portion of the Scriptures, are in precise agreement with those of the most eminent commentators. The Lutheran and Calvinistic theologians of Germany, cited by Poole, in his well-known Synopsis; Henry, Doddridge, and McKnight, among the English and Scotch Presbyterians; Clark among the Methodists; Whitby, Lowman, Scott, and Townsend, with many others, of the Church of England;—all expound the doctrine of the apostle on this subject, in the same way, although not one of them was a friend or advocate of slavery; so that there is hardly a question contained in the whole Book of God, on which there has been, among the great standard divines, a more absolute unanimity.

Having thus briefly shown what is, in truth, “the higher law,” laid down in the Scriptures, I pass on to the testimony of the Church, from the primitive age of Christianity. And here, we have a vast range of ecclesiastical history, commencing in the first century after the death of the apostles, and continued down to modern times. And throughout the whole, we find the same views of the subject, without exception. Slavery existed in every land where the Gospel was established. But nowhere do we find that Christians were required to dismiss their slaves. Nowhere was the relation of master and slave treated as inconsistent

* 1 Tim. vi, 1-5.

† Ep. to Philemon.

with the religion of the Saviour. Cruelty and oppression were indeed forbidden, and made a subject of Church discipline, in extreme cases; but the institution itself was always regarded as perfectly lawful. And such was the general judgment of the Christian world, until the present century. And such it still remains, notwithstanding the vigorous assaults of the last few years, when the question has been made the watchword of political agitation.

It is true, I grant, that many zealous members of the respectable Society of Friends have maintained a contrary opinion. It is also true, and I state it with extreme regret, that a large portion of our Methodist brethren have separated from the rest, on account of what they are pleased to call the *sin of slave-holding*, and there are not a few among the other sects who seem strongly inclined to follow the example. But all of these together amount to a very small fraction of the whole of Christendom. And even if they were much more numerous than they are, they would still be opposed by the unanimous voice of the Universal Church, from the beginning; still be at war with the manifest sense of Scripture, and still be employed in the defence of a notion so recent, that we can all bear testimony to its rise and progress, within our own day.

But it is not by a novelty like this, that the solemn charge of sin can be maintained against our Southern brethren. For sin is defined by the apostle John, to be "THE TRANSGRESSION OF THE LAW."* There must be a law of God, or a law of human government, shown to be in force, before it is possible to predicate sin of its violation; because, as St. Paul distinctly declares, "WHERE NO LAW IS, THERE IS NO TRANSGRESSION."† Here, however, there is not only an absence of any law forbidding the slavery of the heathen race, but there is an express law allowing it to ancient Israel, and an equally plain permission of it by St. Paul, in the Church of Christ. And there is, moreover, the human law of the Southern States, recognized and warranted by the Constitution of the Union. The sin, therefore, since its very essence consists in the *transgression of the law*, is plainly on the side of those who would nullify at once the Word of God and the laws of their country. And it is no light sin which thus claims supremacy above the authority of heaven, and the government of earth, virtually proclaiming itself to be wiser than the Almighty, more merciful than Christ, more pure than the Holy Spirit who guided the apostles, more intelligent than the whole Church for eighteen centuries together, more patriotic than the heroes of the revolutionary war, more upright than the framers of the Constitution. I do not make this assertion for the purpose of impugning the

* 1 John iii, 4.

† Rom. iv, 15.

motives of our Northern abolitionists, because I should be sorry to call in question, for a moment, the benevolent feelings towards the slave, which have led them to such perilous extravagance. They have erred by placing the question in a false light, and viewing it only through the medium of a spurious, though specious philanthropy. But this, although it may palliate the fault as it respects themselves, can neither confer upon their doctrine the sanction of truth, nor relieve its advocates from a perilous responsibility.

On this point, therefore, my friends, I am bound, in all honesty, to declare, that we ought to make a willing concession to our Southern brethren. We have no right to upbraid them with sin, in holding the African race as slaves. They may sin, indeed, if they do not treat their slaves with justice, kindness, and reason, according to the precepts of St. Paul. But, then, the sin lies in the treatment, and not in the relation itself. I do not deny that there are some amongst them who are hard and cruel masters, just as there are not a few amongst our own employers who are unjust and oppressive, and grind the faces of the poor. But the better class confess the duty which rests upon them, to the full extent of scriptural obligation. And I have no doubt that a large proportion amongst them discharge it with commendable fidelity; while it is unquestionable that many are eminent patterns of Christian consistency and virtue.

2. But, now, let us look at our subject in the other aspect of EVIL AND OF DANGER. And here, I think, we may claim a concession from the South, which, if they can only be persuaded to grant it as frankly as did their fathers, may lead to a friendly and fraternal adjustment of the whole difficulty. The ground on which I would ask them to place this concession, is an enlightened regard to their own interest, and that of their posterity. I cannot see that we have any right to require them to abandon their property, and change an important element in their social system, merely to gratify our feelings, or accommodate our prejudices, or deprecate our displeasure. We must show to their entire satisfaction, that in desiring the abolition of slavery, we only desire what is essential to the future welfare and safety of the Slave-States themselves, as well as to the advantage and elevation of the race of Africa. And we must be ready to prove our sincerity by our willingness to bear our portion of the burden which the change may involve, and thus convince them that we are not their enemies, but their friends and brethren.

That Slavery is a dangerous evil, I would prove to them, first, by the acknowledgement of their own most eminent statesmen, who have openly pronounced it "a curse and a blight" upon this country. Such was the opinion of the celebrated Jefferson, of John Randolph, and of a host of other distinguished and patriotic men, members of the Virginia Conven-

tion, held A. D. 1832, in consequence of the insurrection of the slaves, the year before. And such, I doubt not, is now the candid opinion of thousands among our Southern brethren, who only defend slavery on the score of necessity, imposed on them by circumstances beyond their control. Upon the reasons assigned by those eminent men to whom I have alluded, I do not design to dwell, because it is altogether unnecessary. That the *tendency* of slavery is to discourage industry among the owners, and to make labor dishonorable—to tempt the male white population to immorality—to strengthen the habits of self-indulgence, and thus to weaken, if not to destroy, the energy and enterprise of the citizens, and thereby retard the improvement of property, and the advancement of society in all its ramifications—all this, and much more, has been frankly admitted, over and over, by the greatest minds among our Southern statesmen. And, therefore, we of the North, instead of provoking them by reproach, would do better to mourn over the melancholy fact, with fraternal sympathy and sorrow.

The next argument on which I would rely, is also drawn from a confessed fact, viz: that the white population in the Southern States, are never safe from violence. They are like men sleeping on the brink of a volcano, which may, at any moment, burst forth into flame, and bury them in the burning ruin. This horrible danger, arising from conspiracy and insurrection among the slaves, may possibly be increased by the exciting appeals of our ultra-abolitionists, but it is notorious that its terrible effects have been awfully manifested long before our day, and belong, of necessity, to the very nature of the institution. What reader of history is ignorant that the ancient Spartans were obliged to keep down the increase of their slaves, by a periodical massacre? Who does not remember the servile wars of Greece and Rome? The rebellion of the Roman slaves under Spartacus, seventy-one years before the Christian era, had well nigh conquered the legions of the republic. They defeated the armies of the Consuls several times, and the great metropolis itself trembled before them. At length, becoming divided amongst themselves, they were overcome, with the slaughter of sixty thousand men, and the capture of six thousand prisoners. And even then, a large number escaped and renewed the war, until they were finally destroyed by Pompey. In modern days, we have seen the horrible results of slavery in St. Domingo, where the white inhabitants were butchered, with every circumstance of the most revolting cruelty and licentiousness. Nay, even in our own Southern States, there have been many instances of conspiracy intended to produce the same result, notwithstanding the fact, that slavery, among them, is administered with far more kindness and humanity than elsewhere. And these instances occurred before the rise of ultra-abolitionism. The truth is, that the love of liberty is an in-

instinct of nature among all men, and needs no other stimulus than the open contrast between the outward condition of the freeman and the slave. And, therefore, it is impossible, in the nature of things, that the white population of a Slave State can ever be safe from the danger which is inherent in the system. Nor can the ingenuity of man devise a perfect remedy for this, short of abolition.

But the strongest argument connected with this aspect of the question, may be derived from a very recent and able speech, delivered by the Hon. William B. Shepherd, in the Legislature of North Carolina. And I shall take from it a large extract, which is indeed full of solemn warning, not only to our Southern brethren, but to ourselves.

"It is now," saith this eloquent statesman, "a settled principle, that slavery must be restricted within its present limits: the whole power of the federal government is to be brought to bear hereafter, against any expansion of this institution. Let us examine to what condition this principle will bring the South. . . . We learn from the first Census taken by the United States, A. D. 1790, that there were then in the whole Union, 697,897 slaves. By the Census of 1840, it appears that this number had increased to 2,487,355—showing that the law of increase for the black population, in fifty years, was more than three-fold and a half. In the same proportion, the year 1890," (only forty years from the present), "will exhibit a slave population, within the Union, of NINE MILLIONS! Now, I would ask, whether this Union can possibly exist with nine millions of slaves, penned up in the very heart of the republic! And, even supposing this vast population should be quiet and orderly, it is well worth an inquiry, what, in all human probability, will be the pecuniary condition of the owners of these slaves? We know that the slave cultivation is an exhausting and impoverishing one to the soil. This must always be, more or less, the case. The slave is an admirable pioneer to clear and ditch new lands; but even now, with few exceptions, unless upon the best cotton, rice, and sugar plantations, his labor is not remunerative. What, then, must it be, when the number is enormously increased, and that increase is restricted to worn and impoverished soils? The time is rapidly approaching, and the present generation will not pass away before the fact will be apparent, that slave-property will have no transferable or commercial value; the owners of it will see before them hopeless and inextricable poverty, and their only safety will be in abandoning it to its fate. Thus will be realized one of the anticipations of the abolitionists, in *walling in* slavery within its present boundaries. The slave will be practically free; his owner, for fear of starvation, will abandon him—but the end will not be yet. The North, by a combination of agrarianism and infidelity, may ruin the South; but in doing so, she will rear into terrible importance, in the very heart of the republic, mil-

lions of degraded and ignorant human beings, wild with unexpected and unvalued freedom, and prepared for anything that revenge or ambition may propose."

Now, the whole of this is a quotation from the speech of a Southern legislator, who is himself not only a warm advocate for the expansion of slavery, but evidently a man of high intelligence and reflection. Taking his statement of facts and probabilities precisely as he gives it, let us see to what conclusions it ought to lead the friend of the South, and the lover of the Union.

Here, then, we have a frank acknowledgment, first, that slave labor, even now, is not remunerative, except on the best rice, cotton, and sugar plantations: next, that, in forty years from the present time, the soil of the Slave-States will be worn out, and unable to support them: thirdly, that there will then be nine millions of slaves, who will be practically free, because their owners will be compelled to abandon them: and lastly, that this enormous host, urged by want, and stimulated by the the wild spirit of their new liberty, will be ready for the fearful work of ambition and revenge. And this, he assures us, will be witnessed by a large part of the present generation!

Now, I ask you, my friends, whether it is possible to conceive a more awful picture than is here set before us, by a high Southern authority? True! he has presented it as an argument of irresistible force against the policy of confining slavery within its existing limits, and in favor of expanding it to a wider scope. But, surely, it must be evident, that this expansion would be no safeguard against the evil. It might, doubtless, delay the terrible catastrophe, but only to make it more extensive in the end. For like causes produce like effects.

If such is the inevitable result of slavery in the old States, the same result would follow its establishment in the new. What, therefore, could we gain at last by expanding such a system, beyond the postponement of destruction for another generation, which must be overtaken, in due time, by a still more wide-spread ruin?

Thus, then, we have the clearest demonstration, that, within the life of many amongst yourselves, there will be nine millions of famished and desperate men, let loose upon the Union. Where would they betake themselves? The Southern States would not suffice them, if, as we are so positively assured, the soil must be so worn out by a continued course of slave-culture, that they could not live upon it any longer. Then they would, of course, come down upon the rich and fertile fields of the Free States, and a struggle must ensue for our very existence, such as the world has never beheld to the present hour. The incursions of the barbarian hordes which first ravaged and then conquered the old Roman empire, were a light matter, if we draw a comparison between the numbers and

the passions of the invaders in that case and in ours. It may be, truly, that the Northern States would be able to repel them, but it is too likely that the Southern would be overcome, and thus we should see that noble region occupied by negro kingdoms or republics, emulating the career of St. Domingo, in all the triumph of cruelty and blood. O, surely, such a picture of the probable and fast approaching future, drawn, for the most part, by the hand of a Southern statesman, with all the sincerity of deep and sorrowful conviction, should unite every heart and intellect throughout our beloved country, in the effort to prevent the terrible reality, while there is yet time to grapple with the evil—while we have power to arrest its fearful progress, before it is too late!

At this point, therefore, we may find a reasonable basis for mutual concession. Let the North concede that slavery is permitted by the Bible, and, therefore, that the relation of master and slave does not necessarily involve a sin. Let the South concede that slavery is a dangerous and growing evil, threatening their own fair and beautiful land with ruin, and that, within the brief period of the next forty years. What remains, but to unite both North and South in a vigorous and harmonious effort so get rid of this acknowledged and internal enemy? Have we any right to commit a national suicide, by perpetuating what is admitted, on all sides, to be the sure instrument of destruction to our country? Have we any right to close our eyes to the unwelcome truth, when we know that even if we do not behold the awful result, yet it must descend, with all its tremendous horrors, upon the heads of our children? Can we fold our hands, and sleep, and take our rest, when we are assured that this gigantic evil is on its deadly march—and thus, by our supineness, expose ourselves to the reproaches and curses of our blameless but wretched posterity? I trow not. This would not be acting like Christians, nor like patriotic men. The North and the South contain a host of magnanimous spirits, who only need to see the danger, and they will meet it in the face. And I, for one, am firmly convinced that this danger, notwithstanding the serious difficulties which surround it, demands nothing but an united effort, to be by the Divine blessing, effectually overcome.

3. Supposing, then, the North and the South to be of one mind on this main proposition—that slavery is a dangerous evil, and that we must destroy it, or it will destroy us—we are prepared to consider the serious question: How its abolition can be accomplished, with the kindest regard and solicitude for the best interests, first, of our Southern brethren; next, of the slave population; and thirdly, of the Continent of Africa.

The present number of slaves is estimated at three millions. One half of these, at least, may be set down as children, and another fourth part are past their prime. An average price of three hundred dollars

each, would therefore be probably a fair estimation, and this would bring the whole to the vast aggregate of NINE HUNDRED MILLIONS. It is manifest, at a glance, that our Southern brethren cannot afford to sacrifice an amount like this; and hence, even if there were no other objection, an immediate and gratuitous emancipation of the slaves is a pure absurdity.

Independently of this, however, the South neither would nor could endure such an enormous addition to her free black population. All experience is against the hope, that a large body of emancipated slaves would ever be useful or reliable, as hirelings or apprentices, to their former masters. The trial was made, under the most favorable circumstances, by the English Government, when it freed the slaves in the Island of Jamaica; and the consequence was a prostration of the white proprietors, and a depression of public and private interest, from which that fertile land has not recovered to this day.

But England gave the world a noble example of national munificence, in buying all the slaves of that Colony at the cost of twenty millions sterling, which is equal to almost one hundred millions of dollars, in order that she might emancipate them without loss to their owners. Cannot our Government copy this example on a far broader scale, for the purpose of securing a far more important benefit? At least, cannot all the public lands, yet unappropriated, be devoted to this object, so that on them, as on a sure basis, the interest of two hundred millions might be expended, year by year, until the purchase of our slaves should be accomplished? This is only double the amount which the British Government raised by taxation for the Island of Jamaica alone. Whereas we, without taxation, have the power of devoting, to the relief of the whole South and the security of the Union, an enormous domain, containing millions of acres, a large proportion of which is the finest land in the world.

Suppose, then, that the interest of those two hundred millions, that is to say, some twelve millions a year, should be expended in purchasing such slaves as their masters might be disposed to sell, at a fair valuation, and that these emancipated slaves should be conveyed, at the public expense, to the coast of Africa, and settled there by the admirable Colonization Society, in the same manner as those have been who now constitute the young and prosperous Republic of Liberia. In this way, the owners would receive the value of their property; the free black population would not be increased to their annoyance; the emancipated slaves would be placed on the soil of Africa, in the climate for which the Most High has fitted them, and to which the colored race is the only one completely adapted; and there they would have the best field for their energies as freemen, with no humiliating comparisons to provoke their

ill-will, with no obstacles from the superior privileges of the white race to encounter, and with the whole barbarian continent of their fatherland to enlighten with the religion and the knowledge which they had learned in the service of their former masters, to whose aid and protection they would now look, with gratitude and pride, in their new position.

But even this large expenditure of twelve millions a year would only provide for the annual extradition of forty thousand, and, at that rate, it would need seventy-five years to transport the whole three millions to their parent soil, while no arrangement would be made for the natural increase of their offspring. With respect to the first of these difficulties, however, it would be diminished to one half or less, by the hand of nature, since death would probably dispose of a million and a half in thirty or forty years. The second point is the only one of practical importance, and this would demand a distinct provision.

Let us suppose, therefore, in order to meet this part of the case, that the Southern States should consent to pass a law providing that all the children of their slaves, then being under seven years of age, should be free at twenty-five, and that all born after the passage of the law should be free from their birth. And, to avoid effectually the embarrassments likely to arise from the presence of such free children upon the plantations of their parents' masters, suppose our Southern brethren should borrow a law from the ancient Spartans, and have them brought up and maintained by the State, in schools adapted to the purpose, until they were old enough to be bound, say, at the age of fourteen, as apprentices, in the same manner as the children of paupers are bound by the Guardians of the Poor, in our Free States. In this way, the increase of the slaves might be readily and safely provided for; and I can see no reason to doubt that a large proportion of them, if faithfully trained, would become valuable and worthy members of any civilized community.

Such, then, my friends, is the rough outline of the mode, in which it seems, to my humble judgment, that this acknowledged and alarming evil of slavery may be abrogated gradually, peacefully, finally, and forever. The chief difficulty is to persuade the eminent statesmen of the North and the South to consult together for the all-important object, in a spirit of fraternal unity and affection. And for this, we can only hope and pray, in faithful dependence on the Almighty Disposer, in whose hands are the hearts of all men. There may, indeed, seem to be another difficulty in the large amount of money to be expended; but for this, it gives me pleasure to appeal to the declarations of two statesmen, both of whom, although differing in some respects, stand in the first rank of estimation with their friends and their country.

Thus, the honorable and eminent Daniel Webster, in his celebrated speech of March 7th, made the following important suggestions:

"In my observations upon Slavery as it now exists," saith this distinguished orator, "I have expressed no opinion of the mode of its extinguishment or melioration. I will say, however, though I have nothing to propose on that subject, because I do not consider myself so competent as other gentlemen to consider it, that if any gentleman from the South shall propose a scheme of colonization, to be carried on by this Government on a large scale, for the transportation of free colored people to any colony or place in the world, I should be quite disposed to incur almost any degree of expense to accomplish that object. Nay, I would return to Virginia, and through her for the benefit of the whole South, the money received from the lands and territories ceded by her to this Government, for any such purpose as to relieve, in whole or in part, or in any way to diminish or deal beneficially with, the free colored population of the Slave States. . . . There have been received into the treasury of the United States eighty millions of dollars, the proceeds of the public lands ceded by Virginia. If the residue should be sold at the same rate, the whole aggregate will exceed two hundred millions of dollars. If Virginia and the South see fit to adopt any proposition to relieve themselves from the free people of color among them, they have my free consent that the Government shall pay them any sum of money out of its proceeds, which may be adequate to the purpose."

In answer to this speech, and four days later, the eloquent Senator Seward gave utterance to this declaration:

"I will take occasion to say that, while I cannot agree with the honorable Senator from Massachusetts, in proposing to devote eighty millions of dollars to remove the free colored population from the Slave States, and thus, as it appears to me, fortify slavery, there is no reasonable limit to which I am not ready to go, in applying the national treasures to effect the peaceful, voluntary removal of slavery itself."

Here, then, we have two examples of the highest authority, to prove the existence at the North of the most liberal spirit of concession, and to demonstrate a perfect willingness that the treasures of the General Government should be employed, to the fullest extent, in order to accommodate the wants and reasonable requisitions of the South, with regard to their colored population. We see, besides, in the statement of Mr. Webster, that there is an ample basis for the whole amount which I have named, viz: the annual interest of two hundred millions, without going beyond the value of the public lands ceded to the General Government by Virginia. In addition to which, we possess the vast aggregate of many millions of acres, in the new acquisitions resulting from the peace with Mexico. Thus, it seems manifest that we should not be compelled, like England in the noble effort to relieve Jamaica, to rely on the product of taxation. For the favor of Providence has granted us

abundant means, and all that seems wanting, is the willingness of our Southern brethren to use them.

Unhappily, however, there are many leading minds at the South, who conceive that they are driven by the extravagance of our ultra-abolitionists, to the yet wilder extravagance of seceding from the Union. But how would secession help them, even if it were possible to secede without plunging the nation into the horrors of a civil war? Would the institution of slavery be less *walled in*, (as the honorable Mr. Shepherd has strongly expressed the idea), after our Southern brethren had cut themselves off from the Free States, and established their own separate government? Would the slaves be less likely to abscond, when there was no longer any law to compel their restitution? Would their masters find it more easy to expand the area of slavery, when the Free States, which are now their confederated friends, should be converted into foreigners and strangers? Would the slaves cease to multiply until they trebled their numbers every fifty years, or the soil cease to be impoverished until it could no longer sustain them? Would the owners be any better relieved from the doctrines of abolitionists, or from the reproaches of all Europe, which would come then, as they do now, on the wings of every breeze? Would they feel themselves more safe from conspiracy and insurrection, or better protected from the forcible abolition, which threatens, at no very distant day, to overwhelm their posterity, if not themselves, in a deluge of misery and blood? Alas! that such a course should be thought of as a remedy, which could only prove a thousand-fold worse than the disease.

If, therefore, my humble voice could reach them, I would earnestly implore the noble intellects and magnanimous hearts of the South to look at the picture, so faithfully delineated by their own orator, in the legislature of North Carolina, and contemplate steadfastly the threatening aspect of the future, and adopt in season, the kindly offer of the only effectual safeguard, while the opportunity remains of employing for their benefit the vast treasure of our national resources. Is it not infinitely better that they should abolish slavery, gradually and safely, by their own voluntary act, with a fair equivalent for the sacrifice of property, than to wait until it abolishes itself by the hand of ruthless violence? Is it not infinitely more consistent to resume the position of those Southern patriots, who, like Jefferson, denounced the institution of slavery, and expressed the hope that it would soon be done away? Assuredly, if they would only reflect calmly upon the subject, they could not find fault with the North for desiring to abide by the far-famed doctrine of the Declaration of Independence: **WE HOLD THESE TRUTHS TO BE SELF-EVIDENT, THAT ALL MEN ARE CREATED EQUAL, THAT THEY ARE ENDOWED BY THEIR CREATOR WITH CERTAIN UNALIENABLE RIGHTS, AND**

THAT AMONG THESE ARE LIFE, LIBERTY, AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS. Nor can our Southern brethren blame us for cherishing the hope, that these words, dictated by their own fathers, and blazoned before the world as the fundamental principle of our government, may be exemplified by the abolition of slavery, as soon as we can possibly accomplish it, peacefully and well.

But I would further put the inquiry to every Christian mind, Whether there is not, at this day, an extraordinary combination of circumstances, which seem to indicate the hand of an over-ruling Providence, marking the present as the accepted time for such a noble enterprise? For, in the first place, we see that the exciting course of our ultra-abolitionists has forced upon the councils of the nation a sort of crisis, and roused the intellect and feelings of every thinking man throughout the land, to consider the true bearings of the question. And for this, widely as I differ from their peculiar doctrine, I hold them to be worthy of our gratitude. Their office, however painful and irritating, seems to have been necessary. The whole country, South and North, had sunk into a sort of apathy upon the subject, and the strongest stimulants were required to awaken their sensibility, and rouse them to exertion. Abolitionism succeeded in sending able and eloquent men to the House of Representatives and the Senate of the United States. Slavery was violently attacked, and yet more violently defended; and thus the whole argument was pressed upon the universal mind with far more power and effect, than could ever have been produced by the language of wise moderation.

Next, we see the question fairly mooted, whether the Slave States or the Free shall have the final preponderance. The South claimed an equal share in the new territory of the Union. The North had the majority, and refused. And forthwith the threat of secession, and the resolution to accomplish it for the sake of slavery, fills the public mind with alarm and apprehension; and all men are compelled to confess that this element of African servitude has become an irreconcilable foe to the peace and welfare of the country.

Thirdly, we are admitted into the true reasons of our Southern brethren, for all their anxious appeals and solemn warnings. We see that this institution of slavery has brought them to the verge of peril, and that they only demanded room for its expansion, because they had the strongest reasons to dread the consequences of confining it among themselves. And certain it is, that alone, they cannot overcome the difficulties of their position. Alone, they ought not to be required to struggle under such a load. It was not their choice originally. Their most eminent men were opposed to it, before, as well as after, the Revolution. It was forced upon the Colonies by the commercial policy of England, and continued by the commercial policy of some among the

Northern States, who are now the most extreme opponents of the system which they were themselves so instrumental in perpetuating. Hence, the South may be said to have a just claim upon our kindest sympathies, and we are bound to exert ourselves to the utmost in the effort to relieve them from a burden, which must soon become too heavy to be borne.

And lo! as if to furnish us with the ability to do our duty in this matter, we are enabled, by our arrangements with Mexico, to become the owners of the richest territory in the world. New treasures of untold value are discovered and committed to our hand; and our National Legislature seems to wait for some pressing call, to know what should be done with them.

Finally, precisely at the right time to answer the inquiry, after years of patient perseverance, the great experiment of African colonization, which was so wisely planned and so admirably conducted in the face of discouragement and difficulty, grows into perfect shape; and presents itself in the complete form of the Republic of Liberia, to challenge the confidence and satisfy the doubts of all who questioned the intellectual powers of the colored race. Here is a sublime result, which shows the far-reaching Providence of God, in permitting the bondage of the Africans amongst our free and Christian communities. For now we see what a blessing this slavery of their people was designed to become, to the benighted and heathen myriads of that barbarian continent. In the noble young Republic of Liberia, we behold the lessons of improvement learned under the yoke of the Southern States, and which they might never have so well acquired, if they had not been transplanted from the debased condition of their native land. For it is evident, to the slightest reflection, that if there had been no slavery allowed, the Africans must all have remained buried in the grossest idolatry and ignorance. And, therefore, to them, slavery has been the *transition state*, through which it was necessary to pass, from the darkest gloom of Pagan despotism, to the light of civilized and Christian liberty.

And, surely, we have here a noble and beautiful transformation presented to us by this band of pioneers, once slaves, but even as slaves, immeasurably elevated above their countrymen in Africa, by knowledge and religion, and now converted into freemen, settled on their own coast, mingling with their own race, fitted by their physical constitution, for a climate which few white men can endure, and able to carry on, in a manner which no other agency could accomplish, the final regeneration of their proper country, with the applause and admiration of mankind. What can prove, more plainly, the fore-knowledge and goodness of the Almighty, whose ways are so mysterious to human comprehension, and yet so sure to be vindicated by the event at last! For thus we perceive

how slavery has been over-ruled in such a wondrous manner, that liberty has been brought out from bondage; Christianity, from Paganism; civilization, from the most degraded barbarism; knowledge, from the deepest ignorance; an independent republic in Africa itself, from the oppressed and wretched population of its own soil. How worthy a result of that Wisdom and Omnipotence, which, at the first, called light out of darkness! And what a privilege for ourselves, to be the instruments of God in fostering such a glorious work, and enlarging its extent and power, until our remaining multitude of slaves shall be planted along the coast of their father-land, after the model of Liberia, and become a blessing to Africa and to the world!

Such a combination of circumstances, so surprising in themselves, and so far beyond the reach of any human calculation, marks the time when the North and the South may be expected to unite their strength in this noble enterprise. Now, would seem to be the propitious opportunity, for all the elements of success are now prepared. And most deplorable would the infatuation be, which should reject a call of Providence, to an effort so marvelously enforced by the four-fold argument of safety to the South, peace to the Union, freedom to the slave, and regeneration to Africa.

I can anticipate but one serious objection, on the part of our Southern brethren, to the practical working of such a plan; and that is derived from the prevalent idea, that the climate of the South absolutely demands the labor of the colored race, and that no arrangement of free white operatives could be a substitute. I am altogether confident, however, that this notion is founded in mistake. It is well known that white men endure exposure in countries much nearer to the torrid zone, as travelers, soldiers, and hunters. The Chinese and the Turks have no difficulty in cultivating the soil, without negro labor. Our own miners in California have sustained a far more severe course of toil, without injury to health, unless where there was some want of prudence in food, or of caution against intemperance. But there are facts familiar to our Southern brethren themselves, which seem to me quite conclusive on the question. For it is notorious, that the Southern rail-roads have been mainly constructed by the labor of the Irish immigrants, and that the negroes, when sent to work along with these, have always proved to be far less efficient. And it is also well known that there are many farmers in the Southern States, who own a small number of slaves, and take the lead themselves, from necessity, in all the toils incident to husbandry. There need not be any doubt, therefore, on this ground, that the crops which are now lazily cultivated by the slave, might be increased three-fold, by the superior responsibility and energetic habits of our host of foreign hirelings. The diffusion of twelve millions yearly amongst the

Southern States, in exchange for their slaves, would enable them to employ the best free operatives, to enrich their exhausted soils, to multiply their harvests, to save a vast amount of waste and useless expenditure, and to carry on a constant course of profitable improvement. And thus, in due time, they would find the cheering change infuse new vigor into every channel of their productive industry.

Permit me now, then, my friends, to sum up, briefly, the various advantages which seem, in my humble judgment, to recommend the plan proposed.

1. The South would gain a fair price for their slaves, and an active capital for the improvement of their estates; besides, a happy release from abolition doctrines, from the awful risk of conspiracy and insurrection, and from the certain prospect of future ruin to their posterity and their country.

2. The change in their position would be gradual and safe, and demand no sacrifice of comfort or feeling. For the masters would be perfectly free to reserve their domestic servants; and those slaves who preferred to continue under their protection, might remain to the close of life, if their owners chose.

3. The great majority of the slaves, who are supposed to thirst for freedom, would be furnished, in the meanwhile, with a most powerful motive for good behavior, as they would depend upon their masters for their only prospect of manumission by the government.

4. The character of the slaves would be steadily rising, through the stimulus of hope, and the desire of education.

5. The liberated slaves would be sent to Africa; thus relieving their former masters from all apprehension and annoyance, relieving themselves from all humiliating comparisons, and having the best field for advancement, without discouragement or check, in all the privileges of freemen.

6. The coast of Africa would gain a cordon of Colored States, which would become, in connexion with Liberia, the regenerators of the whole continent.

7. Our country would obtain a vast and growing market for its manufactures and its commerce, repaying it, eventually, a hundred-fold for its expenditure. For the continent of Africa is the great depository for the riches of the torrid zone. And her treasures of gold, silver, and jewels, her ivory and ebony, her spices and her dye-woods, with many other articles as yet unknown to us, would form an inexhaustible store of exchange for the supplies of our workshops and our factories.

8. The effect upon the relations of the North and the South would be incalculable, in removing all the irritating causes of dissension from our national councils, and binding our glorious Union in a new bond of cordial fraternity.

9. And the result which would follow, from the wonder and delight of the whole civilized world, is beyond estimation. For we should afford a spectacle of practical philanthropy, which is totally without example in the history of nations. To liberate a million and a half of slaves, and send them home to their own heathen land, as the pioneers of knowledge, freedom, and religious truth, to myriads of their benighted race—this would, indeed, be an achievement to which the annals of mankind can furnish no parallel. Wherever the act should be announced, amongst the nations of Christendom, or the idolators of the East, it could only be received with the voice of acclamation. And the names of the statesmen who should have the generous magnanimity to unite in such a work, would be transmitted in characters of living light, for the admiring homage of posterity.

The pecuniary cost of so splendid and beneficent an enterprise, although it may seem vast, would yet be of small account, in comparison with the dangers from which the Union would be delivered, and the immense benefits to be secured. The Mexican war, in three years, has cost one hundred and fifty millions. But if our present dissensions should proceed, as many fear, to the dreadful extremity of disunion, who can calculate the millions which may be lavished on civil war, and upon the standing armies, the lines of fortifications, and the crowd of regular officials, which a new internal boundary would demand; to say nothing of the deadly enmities, the lacerated and broken hearts, the torrents of blood, the commercial ruin, the grief and shame which must overwhelm the proud boast of our national glory, the shouts of reproachful triumph from the enemies of freedom throughout the world, and the groans and lamentations of all the oppressed, who have been gazing so long upon our bright career, as upon the beacon-star of liberty.

Nor is this the only danger which lies before us. We may escape a *civil* war, and yet a *SERVILE* war might prove our ruin. Remember, that before this generation passes away, if slavery continues as it has done, NINE MILLIONS of the colored race will be ready to claim their rights by the hand of violence. O, in either of those dire and horrible results, how awful will the indulgence of our pride and cupidity appear, which drew us down from our high estate, into a self-created abyss of wretchedness! How marvelous will the infatuation be esteemed, which could madly risk such fatal consequences, rather than make the mutual concessions recommended by the spirit of wisdom and patriotism, of unity and peace.

But if we would deprecate these fearful consequences, my friends, we must take heed how we inflame the fever of the nation by words or acts of an aggravating or offensive character. If we desire to perpetuate the prosperity of the Union, and to exert a useful influence in the final

abolition of slavery itself, we must take heed how we encourage a wanton assault upon the principles, the motives, and the feelings of our Southern brethren. We may, by the Divine blessing, each in his own circle, aid in securing the best and most effectual settlement of the whole difficulty, if we seek it in the temper of fraternal love and kind conciliation. But it can never be done by the wild denunciations of fanatical ultraism. It can never be done by distorting the Word of God, in order to justify the excommunication of men and ministers, who may, for aught we know, be far better Christians than ourselves. Neither can it be done by undertaking to nullify the Fugitive Slave Law, which was passed by the consent of the most eminent statesmen of all parties and sections, North and South, with no other view than to secure the rights of the owners of slaves, as they were guaranteed by the Constitution. Whether its details are susceptible of amendment or not, is a question with which I shall not meddle. But so long as it is the law, I hesitate not to say, that no man may presume to resist its proper execution, without incurring the guilt of rebellion; besides, the fearful risk of open collision between the Government on the one hand, and the partisans of anarchy and confusion on the other, at the cost of riot and of blood.

In opposition to all these disorganizing and most misguided efforts, let us rather employ our influence, my friends, be it much or little, in the cause of peace and order. Let us make due allowance for the peculiar circumstances of our Southern fellow-citizens, and give them the credit which, for the most part, they fully deserve, of upright motives, high principles of probity and honor, and all the kindlier sympathies of human nature. Let us show them that our desire to see slavery abolished, is not merely for the sake of the slaves, but yet more for the sake of the masters, for the safety of the South, and for the lasting security and welfare of our noble Confederation. Let us place our arguments, not on the *sin* of slave-holding, where we never can succeed, but on its *evils* and its *dangers*, where we can prove what we say by the best Southern authority. And thus, by the favor of God upon a course of truth, kindness, and Christian consistency, we may hope that the union of hearts will be followed by a union of intellects, and the national councils be enabled to adopt some thorough and effectual plan, by which we shall in due time, free ourselves from the only source of serious internal dissension, diffuse new streams of improvement and prosperity throughout the Southern States, emancipate the colored race from the yoke of bondage, shed over Africa the light of civilization and religion, and purchase for our beloved country the highest place in the confidence and admiration of the world.

But whether it be possible to adopt this or any other plan, which shall effectually protect our nation from the threatened peril, must de-

pend, at last, upon the Almighty Ruler, who holds in His hands the destinies of the children of men. I doubt not that we have, at this moment, in our public councils, as large an amount of lofty principle, generous purpose, and ardent devotion to our country's good, united to the highest grade of intellectual ability, as ever met together for the responsible task of government. And yet, if they are not guided by Him, who alone seeth the end from the beginning, how easily may they be led astray in the new and complicated difficulties of a position, to which the past experience of mankind has furnished no complete analogy!

On Christians, therefore, who believe in the over-ruling Providence of God, it is incumbent at all times, but especially in a time of agitation like the present, to offer up, with earnest constancy, their fervent supplications, that His infinite wisdom may lead our rulers to the best result, His Spirit, guard them from all the storms of violence and passion, His love, inspire them with the feelings of fraternal confidence and affection, His favor keep them in unity and peace. From one end of our vast territory to the other, may the prayer of faith arise on their behalf to the throne of the great Redeemer and Preserver of His people. And then, as we may humbly hope, they will be guided to the counsels of truth: our glorious Union will shine in renewed brightness and strength; and "God, even our own God, will give us His blessing."

NOTES.

NOTE I. Since it has been thought best to publish the foregoing Lecture, I have thought it might be acceptable to the reader to have a more distinct notice of the arguments by which the ultra-abolitionist seeks to evade the authority of Scripture, and to break down the Constitution of the Union. I propose, therefore, to examine them briefly.

First, it is said, that it is a sin to hold a slave, because it is against the Divine law—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." The answer is very obvious. The relation of master and slave had, doubtless, its origin in war, when the conqueror, having a right to the life of his enemy, gave him his life on condition of perpetual servitude for himself and his offspring. Hence slavery should be regarded, not as a system ordained for its own sake, but as an allowance of a lesser, instead of a greater evil. In this aspect of the question, it is to be tolerated as one amongst the manifold imperfections of our fallen state, in which men have been permitted to do much which would never have been lawful, if sin and death had not entered the world.

Whether, therefore, the allowance of slavery has not been, on the whole, better in the judgment of humanity, than the utter extermination which war would have produced without it, is one of the first questions to be determined. It may, indeed, be said, that war itself is inconsistent with the precept—"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Yet Christian moralists generally maintain that just wars, in defence of natural and political rights, are not forbidden. The Society of Friends, or Quakers, as they are usually called, are the only persons who have adopted the broad ground, that all resistance to wrong is prohibited to the Christian. And their doctrine will doubtless be practicable in the next world, after all wickedness shall have been driven away, and we are privileged to enjoy "the new heavens and the new earth, wherein shall dwell righteousness." But it would have made sad work with the American Revolution.

The precept, to love our neighbor as ourselves, however, has never been interpreted, even by the Quakers, to extend to the equalizing of the state and condition of men, in the various ranks of the community. They have no more inclination than others, to diffuse their wealth amongst the poor, to bring the homeless and the destitute into their parlors, and place them on a level with their own family, or even to emulate that first church of the apostles in Jerusalem, where the disciples "had all things common." They are opposed to war and opposed to slavery; but in all the ordinary business of life, they have the reputation of being at least as careful of their individual interests as the rest of the world around them. And yet it is evident that the precept of the Saviour, taken by itself, has a universal range; and if it does not operate on the daily current of human affairs, it is practically of no use whatever. Nor is it altogether a very convincing proof of the sincerity with which men insist upon this Divine command, if we see it set aside in every question of private gain, and only brought forward when its exhibition can cost them nothing.

I admit, nevertheless, as fully as the ultra-abolitionists, the duty of aiming, in all our relations, to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is, doubtless, the perfect law of Christian obligation, which binds us all, so far as it is possible to manifest it in our present state of mortal probation. But before I allow that these gentlemen have a right to vilify the slave-owner, because he falls short of it, I think it only fair to ask that they will set an example of obedience to the *specific* counsel of the same Divine Teacher, where He saith, "If thou wouldst be perfect, sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and come, take up thy cross and follow me."

There is, however, a radical error in the whole assumption on which they base their argument. For there is nothing in the relation of master and slave which prevents the exercise of Christian love—but rather the contrary. It is not love, but fear, that prevents the hireling from being treated with as much harshness as if he were a slave. And when we remember the qualities on which this affection of love must depend, we shall discover, without difficulty, that the fact of a fellow creature being altogether dependent on us, and that for life, would have

a natural tendency to increase our attachment, and interest us more deeply in his happiness. And hence I might safely defy the largest research to discover the thousandth part of the cases of mutual affection, between our employers and their free hirelings, which have existed, and still exist, between the Christian slave and his master.

These gentlemen, indeed, take it for granted, that if the owner of a slave loved him according to the Saviour's rule, he would immediately set him free, and raise him to an equality with himself, in social privilege. A strange operation of love, truly, to cut the bond of connexion, and seek to cast its object loose upon the world! But it is a good rule that works both ways. What, then, I would ask, can these arguers exhibit, to show the larger amount of their love, to the free laborers in their employment? How do they manifest their solicitude to raise their workmen to their own level? When do they slacken the grasp of power, which education and capital give them over the toiling multitude? And can there be a more preposterous display of hypocrisy than to claim, as the offspring of Christian love, the hard and reckless system, which is notoriously the pure result of the most selfish pecuniary calculation?

But to prove conclusively, that this precept of Christ was never intended to change the outward relations of society, it is enough to remind my Christian readers, that the law itself was laid down in the Book of Deuteronomy, and formed a part of the Mosaic dispensation, at the very time that the Almighty expressly allowed His chosen people to buy slaves of the heathen race, among and around them. In addition to which, we have seen the explicit directions of St. Paul, and his practice besides, in sending the slave Onesimus back to his master. It results, of course, that the precept can only be rightly applied to the motives and feelings of the Christian heart, since the Word of God affords no example of extending it to the subversion of the fixed outward forms of rank and condition in society. Thus understood, it is an invaluable rule of religious obligation, which regulates the discharge of all the relative duties. Whereas, if we undertake to apply it otherwise, we shall not only place ourselves in open opposition to the Scriptures of Divine truth, but destroy the whole frame-work of every civilized community.

NOTE II. The ultra-abolitionist is stone-blind to those parts of the Bible which condemn his favorite notions, but is exceedingly zealous in urging detached texts, which have no real connexion with the point in controversy. Thus he reiterates continually the language of the prophets, directing the Israelites to "break every yoke," to "deliver the oppressed," &c., and, since the passage of the Fugitive Slave Law, he is especially partial to a verse in Deuteronomy, which directs the Israelites not to deliver again to his master the slave that had escaped, and placed himself under their protection. To understand these texts aright, and to show their complete consistency with the law which allowed them to hold slaves of the heathen, a little attention will be necessary. And I need hardly remind the reader, that it is the solemn duty of every intelligent Christian to maintain the harmony of the Word of God, and to beware how he interprets it so that one part is made to conflict with another.

I have cited, in the Lecture, (pages 7 and 8), the Mosaic law, by which the Jews were allowed to sell each other for debt, but only for a limited time, being expressly forbidden to hold an Israelite under perpetual bondage; while they were as expressly permitted to buy slaves of the heathen races around them. But it often happened, in the course of corruption which marked their subsequent history, that they refused to let their own brethren go free, when the time had expired, and thus unjustly kept them under the yoke of a prolonged and unlawful servitude. To this class of cases, therefore, the rebukes of the prophets belong; nor is there a single passage of the kind which can be consistently understood of the other.

There is an interesting instance of this sort of oppression in the Book of Nehemiah, Ch. V. v. 1-8, which it may be well to quote at large, because it is a case directly applicable to the question. The passage is in the words following:

"And there was a great cry of the people against their brethren, the Jews. For there were that said . . . We have mortgaged our lands, vineyards, and our houses, that we might buy corn, because of the dearth. There were also some that said, We have borrowed money for the king's tribute, upon our lands and vineyards. Yet now our flesh is as the flesh of our brethren, our children as their children; and lo, we bring into bondage our sons and our daughters to be servants, and some of our daughters are brought into bondage already: neither is

it in our power to redeem them; for other men have our lands and vineyards. And I was very angry when I heard their words. Then I rebuked the nobles and the rulers, and said unto them, Ye exact usury, every one of his brother. And I set a great assembly against them. And I said unto them, We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren the Jews, which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us? Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer."

Here we see a specimen of the Jews' mode of oppressing the poor of their own nation, by usurious contracts, by mortgages upon their family inheritances, and finally, by bringing into actual bondage their sons and daughters. And, therefore, the rebuke of the governor, Nehemiah, is administered, just like the rebuke of the prophets in other places, against a species of offence which was of frequent recurrence, although it had nothing to do with the case of the heathen slaves, which the ultra-abolitionist erroneously supposes to have been in question. For at this very time, when the Jews had but just returned from their own captivity, we find that they had seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven male and female slaves, amounting to nearly one-fifth of their whole number.* And of their condition, we do not find the slightest complaint, either here or elsewhere.

And the reason of the difference lies in this—that the heathen race were brought into a far more happy and advantageous condition, when they were purchased as slaves by the Israelites, than they could possibly have enjoyed in their own land. And therefore slavery to these was an act of mercy and benevolence, although to the Israelite, it was an act of injustice and oppression. Hence the Almighty established this broad discrimination between them, allowing the Jews to purchase slaves of the heathen race, but forbidding them to make slaves of one another. Hence, too, when a slave escaped from a heathen master and came into Judea, the Israelite was directed not to deliver him up again to heathen bondage, but to allow him to remain amongst themselves, in order to give him the opportunity of religious knowledge and security, which he could not have expected in his native country. This is the true and consistent sense of the text in Deuteronomy. But the meaning for which the ultra-abolitionist contends, in his zeal against the Fugitive Slave Law, would be absurd. For it is evident that no system of slavery could have been maintained in Judea at all, if every runaway was withheld from his Jewish master.

NOTE III. There are, doubtless, many excellent persons, who have imbibed such an awful idea of Southern Slavery, as to wonder how it is possible to reconcile it with reason, that such an institution could be permitted by the benevolence of the Almighty. A few remarks may be necessary to explain this seeming incongruity.

It must be remembered, then, that the Slavery of the South, like that which the Deity allowed to Ancient Israel, is confined to the race of the heathen. The negro came, originally, from the most benighted part of Africa. The Slave-trade was supplied by the wars of the barbarian natives, and many a gifted poet has exerted his fancy in mourning over the fate of those who were thus violently torn away from home, and friends, and kindred, to be bond-slaves for life, and their children after them, in our Christian land. But these good men would have found it rather difficult to find scope for their philanthropy on that score, if they had only paused to reflect on the kind of home and society from which the Africans were taken. On this important part of the question, it may be enough to cite a few unquestionable facts, taken from the large work of Malte Brun, one of the most reliable of our modern Geographers.

"The slave-coast of Africa," says this writer, "consists of several petty States, which are all under the despotic sway of the king of Dahomey. This barbarian monarch chooses to have women for his body-guard, and his palace is surrounded by one thousand of these amazons, armed with javelins and muskets, from whom he selects his special military aids and messengers. His ministers, when they come into the royal presence, are obliged to leave their silk robes at the gate of the palace, and approach the throne, walking on all-fours, and rolling their heads in the dust. The ferocity of this African despot almost surpasses conception. The road to his residence is strewn with human skulls, and the walls are adorned and almost covered with jaw-bones. On public occasions, the sable monarch walks in solemn pomp over the bloody heads of vanquished princes or disgraced ministers. At the festivals of the tribes, to which all the people bring presents

* Neh. viii, 6-7.

for the king, he drenches the tombs of his fore-fathers with human blood. Fifty dead bodies are thrown around the royal sepulchre, and fifty heads displayed on poles. The blood of these victims is presented to the king, who dips his fingers into it and licks them. Human blood is mixed with clay, to build temples in honor of deceased monarchs. The royal widows kill one another, till it pleases the new sovereign to put an end to the slaughter. And the crowd assembled at their most joyous festivals applaud such scenes of horror, and delight in tearing the unhappy victims to pieces.*

The people, as might be expected, are sunk into the most degrading habits, in all the social relations of life, and especially in all their notions of religion. "They eat the carcass of the elephant, even when full of vermin. The musky eggs and flesh of the crocodile are welcome to their appetite. Monkeys are generally used for food. Animals found dead and putrid, give no disgust, and at their greatest feasts, a roasted dog is counted a luxury. Their dwellings are rude huts, consisting of a few trunks of trees, covered with straw or palm-leaves. Their furniture is usually confined to two or three calabashes. The rich have some fire-arms, obtained from the Europeans; and the sovereigns, who adorn their residences with human skulls and jaw-bones, have stone-ware and carpets of English manufacture. But the mass look for nothing beyond the supply of the simplest wants of nature. Twenty days in the year are enough in that luxuriant climate for their labors in husbandry. Their clothing is woven by the women from the wild cotton. And their time is given up, for the most part, to dancing at night, to the sound of horns and drums, and their days to gaming, of which they are passionately fond. Polygamy is practised to a greater degree than is found among any other people. As to their religion, it is the lowest kind of idolatry. They adore, and in time of difficulty consult, any object that strikes their fancy—a tree, a rock, a fish-bone, an egg, a horn, a date-stone, or a blade of grass. In Whidah, a serpent is regarded as the god of war, of trade, of agriculture, and of fertility. It is kept in a kind of temple, and attended by an order of priests. A company of young women are consecrated to it, whose business it is to please their deity with wanton dances and a life of systematic licentiousness. In Benin, a lizard is the object of public worship, and a leopard in Dahomey."†

Of course, neither liberty nor social comfort can exist, where laws and manners so barbarous prevail. "Two-thirds of the negro population lead lives of hereditary bondage in their own country, and those who are free are liable to be reduced to slavery at any moment, by the order of their despots. As an instance of the awful tyranny under which they groan, it is related that, on the death of Freenpoong, king of the Akims, the people sacrificed his slaves upon his tomb, to the number of several thousands, together with his prime-minister, and three hundred and sixteen of his women. All these victims were buried alive, their bones having been previously broken. And for several days, the crowd performed dances, accompanied with songs, round the spot, where these unfortunate beings suffered lingering and horrible agonies."‡

Now, here is the account furnished by Malte Brun, who was no friend to slavery, but earnestly desired its total abolition. And it is surely enough to show any humane and thoughtful mind, the reason why the wisdom of God permitted His people to buy slaves from the heathen. It was, doubtless, of the highest benefit to the Pagans of ancient times, to be transplanted from a state of revolting idolatry to the Commonwealth of Israel. And it is manifest, that the negroes of Africa are yet more privileged by a transfer to the government of those who belong to the most enlightened portion of the human family. No reflecting man can possibly doubt, that their condition in the scale of moral, social, and religious life, is incomparably higher in every point of view, than it ever could have been had they remained in their native land. No one can believe that the few cases of gross mal-treatment amongst our Southern slaves, of which we hear so much, can equal the atrocious horrors of common occurrence, in their own country. While, with regard to the great majority of the Southern slaves we have no reason to question that they are treated with justice, with humanity, and often with a large measure of Christian indulgence and affection. Their persons are protected, their wants are supplied, their labors are much lighter than those of our hirelings, their innocent amusements are encouraged, their morals are elevated, they are taught the truths of the only real religion, and when they show any signs of peculiar talent, they are frequently educated so as

* Malte Brun's *System of Universal Geography*, Vol. 2, p. 77, Boston ed. of 1834

† *Ib.* p. 88-9.

‡ *Ib.* p. 90.

to be fit for places of domestic trust and confidence. In sickness, they are nursed with care. In old age, they are made comfortable. And the general opinion of unprejudiced Northern men, who have resided at the South long enough to form a fair judgment, is, that on the whole, there is far more average morality, more cheerfulness, and enjoyment of life, and far less vice and suffering, exhibited by the slave population, than by the free negroes, or even by many of the laboring class among ourselves. The strongest proof of this is found in the fact, that the better sort of slaves consider themselves much happier in their circumstances than the free blacks around them; that they become warmly attached to their masters, and often beg to be retained, even when their liberty is offered to them. Why, then, should it be thought strange that the Gospel permits Christians to bestow these benefits upon a barbarous race, who could never have been brought under the same process of improvement, except in the relation of slavery? Why should our philanthropists strive to evade the plain meaning of the Word of God in the matter, on the ground that it is opposed to the Divine benevolence? For is it not manifest that if our forefathers had been of their mind, the millions of Africans who have been brought to our shores, and thus introduced into a sphere of comparative civilization and Christian knowledge, must have lived and died in their own land, surrounded by cruelty, steeped in Pagan licentiousness, and doomed to the deepest wretchedness of human nature. That slavery is a great evil to us, is a proposition which is sufficiently proved in the Lecture. Whether it is an evil to the colored race, is quite a different question. And it is one which no impartial mind can settle, until the comparison with our white population on the one side, is weighed fairly against the comparison with the inhabitants of Africa upon the other.

NOTE IV. However certain I regard it, that the slavery of the African race is tolerated by the Gospel, and therefore does not, so far as the mere relation of master and slave is concerned, involve any sin; yet it is quite as certain that it is nowhere *enjoined* as a matter of obligation, but only *permitted* as an arrangement, which must at some time be done away. Hence, I presume, none of our Southern brethren suppose that it is intended to last forever. For all Christians believe, that the period will come when Africa shall be regenerated. It is expressly written, that "Ethiopia shall lift up her hands unto God," that "all the kingdoms of the world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ," and that "the whole earth shall be filled with His glory." An interesting question is here involved, which our Southern friends would do well to consider, viz: Whether the manifest spirit of the age, and the progress of events since the commencement of the present century, do not strongly indicate that the whole aspect of the subject is rapidly assuming a new form, preparatory to the final consummation. Perhaps it may be useful to look at the matter in this light, if only to show, that the general desire of the Free States to see slavery abolished is the natural result of circumstances, for which the enlightened portion of the Slave States should make a fair allowance, instead of regarding it as the result of a wanton spirit of aggression.

At the time of the American Revolution, slavery was legalized in almost all the States; and throughout Europe, as well as our own Continent, there was an agreement on the propriety and expediency of the system, which was nearly universal. A generation has passed away, and behold! slavery has become, and is daily more and more becoming, a theme of reproach and denunciation, so that it would be difficult at this day to find a man bold enough to advocate it openly, from one end of Europe to the other. Such is the present aspect of public opinion, and we all know that public opinion is the strongest power of the nineteenth century.

The Friends, or Quakers, were the first who labored to effect the abolition of the slave-trade, as early as the year 1727. They abolished it among themselves in 1751. It was not till 1772, that Granville Sharpe effected the establishment of the principle, by the English Courts, that a slave, landing in England, becomes free; in which principle, however, France had been before them. In 1783, a petition was presented to Parliament, praying for the abolition of the slave-trade, and through the untiring efforts of the excellent Clarkson, Wilberforce, first, and then Pitt, and Fox, were induced to advocate the measure. But yet, so strong was the opposition, that they did not succeed until 1807, after a struggle of twenty-three years. Meanwhile the Declaration of American Independence, from the pen of Jefferson, had proclaimed to the world the fundamental principle, that all men were created free and equal, a principle which is certainly

at open war with slavery, unless upon the absurd hypothesis which many were found to advocate, that negroes were not men, but an intermediate race between man and the baboon! In 1794, the ordinance against the slave-trade, proposed by Southern statesmen, was passed by Congress, and in the same year, the French National Convention declared the freedom of all the slaves in their colonies. In 1807, our National Legislature passed a law, pronouncing the slave-trade piracy. In 1814, Denmark followed the example of England by abolishing it. In the next year, 1815, Portugal engaged to take the same course, in consideration of £300,000 to be paid by England, besides remitting the balance of a loan, to the amount of £600,000 more. About the same time, the principal sovereigns of Europe, by their plenipotentiaries, declared the slave-trade to be "the degradation of Europe and the scourge of humanity." In 1817, Spain agreed to prohibit it within three years, on condition that England should pay £400,000 to indemnify the Spanish merchants for their loss, in abandoning the traffic. And in 1818, the King of the Netherlands entered into a convention with the British Government for the same object; since which, England has emancipated the slaves in her colonies, by purchasing them, at a full price, from their masters.

We see, therefore, that the first great impulse on this subject, has proceeded from the South, in the Declaration of Independence, and the ordinance of 1794, against the slave-trade; and it is well known that all men expected the abolition of the trade to be followed, naturally and speedily, by the extinction of slavery. For, in the reports made to the British Parliament in 1789, the number of the slaves in the West Indies was calculated at 410,000, and, to keep up that number, it was estimated that an importation of 10,000 from Africa, every year, would be necessary. The abolition of the trade, was therefore assumed, on all sides, to involve the abolition of slavery. And although experience, in our country at least, has sufficiently proved the error of this assumption, yet the fact is none the less true, that all these measures took their rise from a strong antipathy to slavery itself, and were aimed at the ultimate point of its total abolition, by the process of natural decay.

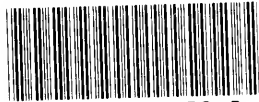
Now with the force of this strong and almost universal sentiment pressing upon them, is it strange that the feeling against slavery should be prevalent amongst all classes, throughout the Free States of the Union? Is it any wonder that the American citizen is forced to hang down his head, when the voice of Europe haunts him with the contradiction between our republican theory and our practice? Is it a subject for just surprise that the Northern States, who know that our Government made the first declaration against slavery, should be humbled at the reflection that England has done so much to abolish it, by consistent action upon the principle; while the evil is growing in our country, year by year, into greater magnitude than before?

It is not religion, because we have already seen that the Gospel tolerates all the various forms of human society, and accommodates itself alike to the bond and the free. It is not religion, because it influences thousands who show no sensibility whatever to spiritual truth. But is stronger than religion with the multitude, who believe themselves actuated by a generous philanthropy, and it is so firmly established in the general mind, amongst the nations of Europe, that it may now be called an inseparable element of the SPIRIT OF THE AGE. I have already shown why I think our ultra-abolitionists are utterly mistaken in their accusations against the slave-holder, and no less mistaken in the remedy which they insist upon, of immediate and universal emancipation. But I do not think them mistaken in their reliance upon the general sympathy of Christendom, nor have I any doubt that they are engaged in a work which will always command a loud response of encouragement, not only from England, but from every other part of Europe, on the familiar and popular principle of our own Declaration of Independence, that PERSONAL LIBERTY IS AN UNALIENABLE PORTION OF THE RIGHTS OF MAN.

To my own mind, the signs of the times are abundantly significant of the change which is approaching, in the condition of Africa. The long ages of her servitude are about to pass away. The days of her regeneration are drawing nigh. God grant that the great event may be consummated in such a manner, that the Southern States of our beloved Union shall have the privilege of being instrumental in the happy result, and that our whole land may be able to rejoice in a harmonious plan of just, safe, and prosperous abolition.



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